

KEEPING TRAVELERS SAFE OFF THE HIGHWAY



TERRY TOOLEY

AGENCY

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet

OFFICE

Monroe County Maintenance

HOMETOWN

Tompkinsville

HOBBIES

Gardening, American Indian history

Catch a ride with Terry Tooley across the Cumberland River

Terry Tooley began his career in state government approximately 20 years ago. A resident of Monroe County and graduate of Tompkinsville High School, he used the ferry on occasion and thought it would be interesting to work at the ferry. A position came available with the Monroe County maintenance facility, and Terry decided to put in an application. The rest is history.

As ferry boat captain, Terry loves the job. He enjoys being outside, meeting people, and seeing all kinds of wildlife (bobcats, deer, turkeys) on a regular basis, “including two eagles that swoop around the ferry crossing pretty regularly.”

He gets a kick out of the number of local grandparents who will bring their grandchildren to ride the ferry across the Cumberland River. Many people who travel along KY-214 aren’t aware there’s a ferry along the route, nor have they ever crossed by ferry, so it’s almost like a “special” event...not just crossing the river. Working weekends, he has the opportunity to meet and greet a lot of tourists, which he enjoys. “I always try to leave a good impression so they will want to return to Monroe County,” he said.

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During the summer months, there will be as many as 350-400 who use the ferry on a daily basis.

Although he appreciates being outside, adjusting to the extreme temperatures can be a challenge.

One of his most challenging experiences occurred a few years ago. As Terry completed a trip across the river with a load of vehicles, he heard a loud noise, and the propeller failed. They were able to quickly get everyone off safely, but “The boat ended up sinking!” They now have a new barge and boat.

He considers one of his achievements to be his job - getting folks back and forth across the river safely. “I’m just proud to be able to stay healthy and continue to work; to work with respectful, good people and to have a lot of good friends.”

Terry lives in the house that belonged to his great grandfather, Theadrick Tooley. The elder Tooley was a Civil War soldier. Terry still works the farm, keeps the yard maintained, and raises a garden every year, canning his harvest himself. He also enjoys studying and learning, especially the history of American Indians.

